

Act's employer mandate, volunteer organizations with 50 or more employees could be forced to provide health insurance or pay penalties. This could decimate the financial solvency of firefighting organizations across my home State and the country.

I, along with colleagues from the House and Senate, have pushed to have the Internal Revenue Service clarify this situation. Last month I joined with Pennsylvania Representative LOU BARLETTA, along with 30 other colleagues, on the introduction of legislation that would ensure these volunteers are not counted as full-time employees under the ACA.

As a result of these efforts, on Friday, January 10, the IRS announced they will not be considering volunteer firefighters as employees for purposes of the law. While the IRS announcement is a huge step in the right direction, that does not make the decision final. The devil always tends to be in the details.

Mr. Speaker, this cloud of uncertainty for our volunteers and the populations they protect must be removed. With that said, I look forward to reviewing the final ruling and will work to ensure there is certainty provided in a timely fashion.

#### IN MEMORY OF VICTIMS OF THE HAITI EARTHQUAKE

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. To my Haitian constituents, those of Haitian descent in Houston, Texas, and those around the Nation, I want you to know that we have not forgotten you.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in memory of the victims of the Haitian earthquake that took so many hundreds of thousands of Haitian citizens in a terrible, massive disaster. Nearly 4 years after Haiti's devastating earthquake, there is still too little transparency and accountability, with too much work to do and too many Haitians suffering.

As Haitian Americans are caught up in our broken immigration system, it is important for them to know that we have not forgotten their loved ones. There are close to 300,000 people still living in tent camps, many of whom are facing forced evictions. Although there was a great deal of sympathy and help, now is the time to be able to look to those who are still suffering.

Cholera has killed over 8,400 Haitians and sickened over 689,000; hundreds of thousands of Haitians have little or no access to potable water or basic health services; Haiti is facing an impending food crisis; and the children are suffering, according to local and international organizations. That is why I have supported H.R. 3509, the Assessing Progress in Haiti Act of 2013. This legislation will give Congress information.

According to the GAO, Congress lacks information on the amount of

funds that have been obligated and disbursed. But Congress must do something. They are our friends and neighbors; they are our allies, and Haiti cannot suffer this alone.

As I conclude, let me thank the Congressional Black Caucus for the work that it has done. Without ceasing, we will continue to work together and work with this Congress.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to remember the victims of the massive earthquake in Haiti four years ago.

Nearly four years after Haiti's devastating earthquake, there is still far too little transparency and accountability around U.S. relief and reconstruction aid efforts.

There are close to 300,000 people still living in tent camps, many of whom are facing forced evictions. Cholera has killed over 8,400 Haitians and sickened over 689,400 since it was first introduced to Haiti in October of 2010.

Hundreds of thousands of Haitians have little or no access to potable water or basic health services, and Haiti is facing an impending food crisis according to local and international organizations, and the government of Haiti.

That is why we should pass H.R. 3509, the "Assessing Progress in Haiti Act of 2013." This legislation, which I am proud to co-sponsor, will greatly assist Congress in overseeing U.S. assistance in Haiti by providing lawmakers, the U.S. public, and Haitians with key details on the manner in which U.S. taxpayer money is being spent.

According to the GAO, "Congress lacks information on the amounts of funds obligated and disbursed and program-by-program progress of U.S. reconstruction activities [in Haiti]."

Mr. Speaker, the people of Haiti continue to face tremendous challenges and still need our help.

That is why it is essential that we ensure that U.S. assistance to Haiti is delivered efficiently is more essential than ever.

#### 2010 HAITI EARTHQUAKE

(Ms. WILSON of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on the fourth anniversary of the worst natural disaster in recent history, the earthquake in Haiti of 2010, I rise to honor those affected and salute the strength and resilience of the Haitian people.

The earthquake in January 2010 claimed hundreds of thousands of lives and destroyed the livelihoods of nearly 3 million more people. Take a moment to contemplate the enormity of this calamity:

More than three-quarters of the schools in the capital were rendered useless, leaving young Haitians with little opportunity to learn and no safe space to spend their time;

A quarter of the civil servants in Port-au-Prince were killed, resulting in an overwhelming need for administrative service providers and security personnel.

Thanks to the resolve and hard work of the Haitian people, as well as effec-

tive assistance from the Obama administration and our international partners, Haiti has started on the process of recovery.

The fourth anniversary of Haiti's tragedy provides an opportunity to honor those who lost their lives and recognize the progress that has been achieved. It is also a time to reaffirm our commitment to help Haiti rebound, by insisting on accountability and transparency.

#### WATER SCARCITY

(Mr. TONKO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, with all of the recent reporting on snow and rain events, it is hard to imagine that water scarcity is one of the greatest threats from climate change, but it is. And water scarcity already imposes tremendous costs and suffering on some 1.3 billion people around the world.

A study published in the proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences combined agricultural and water models to gain a more realistic estimate of the impacts of climate change on food production. The results were not encouraging. Agriculture is our largest single use of water, primarily for irrigation; and it is irrigation water that the study's authors project will be reduced significantly, converting between 48 and 148 million acres from irrigated to rain-fed land.

There are substitutes for many materials we use but not for water. We must protect water resources and use them with care. And part of that effort must be to address climate change by limiting the emissions that are threatening our futures and that of our children.

Food supplies, human health, and economic and social progress all require adequate, reliable clean water supplies. We should act now before any more people are forced to endure water shortages.

#### DELTA SIGMA THETA SORORITY, INCORPORATED

(Mr. VEASEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Fort Worth, Dallas, and Arlington chapters of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated, on their Founders Day for 101 years of dedicated service to our communities.

Founded in 1913 by 22 women on the campus of Howard University, Delta Sigma Theta is an organization committed to scholarship, sisterhood, and service. Deltas are committed to service and provide assistance and support through established programs like Delta GEMS, a program the Fort Worth alumnae chapter hosts at T.A. Sims Elementary School each month,

which works to empower high school girls. In Arlington, Deltas help fight heart disease through Zumba and line dancing as a part of the Go Red Campaign. And in Dallas, Deltas provide free hair styling for senior citizens at their Joy Woodfork Beauty Salon.

I applaud the Dallas/Fort Worth alumnae chapters and the thousands of Deltas nationwide for their distinguished service to our country, State, and the world, and I wish them many more.

#### CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS ADDRESSES UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COLLINS of New York). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. HORSFORD) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. HORSFORD. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate this designated hour at the beginning of this week for the Congressional Black Caucus, as it normally does, to come to this floor to bring forward issues that are very important to the American people. Tonight I join with my colleagues to speak about the importance of extending unemployment insurance benefits, growing our economy, and putting people back to work. So for the next hour, the Congressional Black Caucus will talk about the dire need for emergency unemployment insurance benefits and the fact that it is time for Congress to do its job.

I would like to thank my coanchor, Mr. JEFFRIES from New York, and our chair, the Honorable MARCIA FUDGE from Ohio, for their leadership and working tonight to bring forward these important issues.

At this time, I would like to yield to the gentlelady from New York, Representative CLARKE.

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Las Vegas (Mr. HORSFORD) for his leadership and guidance during this CBC Special Order.

Today I rise to support the extension of emergency unemployment benefits. Since 2008, both parties have come together to provide extra weeks of unemployment benefits for our fellow Americans. These Americans are our neighbors, our relatives, our friends, and constituents who are unemployed through no fault of their own. They have consistently tried to find employment, having pounded the pavement each and every day but, unfortunately, to no avail. They deserve our help.

Unemployment benefits help Americans pay for their most basic survival needs: food, housing, and medical care. If unemployment benefits are not extended, approximately 5 million Americans are expected to lose emergency unemployment benefits over the next 12 months; and of that number, 383,000 are New Yorkers.

Failing to extend the emergency benefits will reduce economic growth by

0.4 percent in the first quarter of 2014 and cost our economy 310,000 jobs next year. Is this really another problem that we want to have our Nation face?

It is important to realize that unemployment not only negatively affects individuals and their families but also our economy, in particular, small business owners. The mom-and-pop shops that are the pillars in our communities suffer more when their customers cannot patronize their businesses.

Mark Zandi, chief economist at Moody's Analytics, has found that every \$1 spent on unemployment insurance grows the economy by \$1.55.

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These dollars circulating through the economy create jobs. Despite statements to the contrary made by some of my Republican colleagues, no one wants to be unemployed. Americans want to work. It is part of the American ethos. It is also part of the American ethos to help our fellow citizens out when they are down. We all must remember that, but for the grace of God, go I.

I close by asking Speaker BOEHNER to bring an emergency unemployment benefit extension bill to the floor, and, in doing so, help not only our economy but, most importantly, millions of deserving and unemployed Americans.

Mr. HORSFORD. I would like to thank the gentlelady from New York. Thank you for your hard work and for bringing your perspective to the need for extending the unemployment insurance benefits to the 1.3 million Americans who, as of this week, have now lost receiving that benefit. This is the week that they would have otherwise received that unemployment insurance benefit in the mail. So this is real for some 1.3 million Americans who are struggling this week to meet their obligations to keep the lights on, to put food on the table and to pay the rent. This is the week. Each week that Congress fails to act, 72,000 Americans—additional Americans—lose their unemployment insurance benefits. One person every 8 seconds, Mr. Speaker, loses their uninsurance benefits when Congress fails to act.

That is why the Congressional Black Caucus is here this evening, to bring attention to this urgency of now. Every week, 72,000 Americans are struggling—additional Americans—on top of the 1.3 million who already, as of December 28, have lost their unemployment insurance.

So this is real, and the impacts are real.

I would like to go to the vice chairman now of the Congressional Black Caucus, the gentleman from North Carolina, who provides tremendous leadership to our caucus and to the issues important to the American people, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BUTTERFIELD).

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Let me thank you, Mr. HORSFORD, for yielding to me this evening. Let me also thank you for

your passion and your tireless work not only on behalf of the Congressional Black Caucus but on behalf of the people of Clark County, Nevada, and all of the other people that you represent in your great State.

Thank you very much for your tireless energy. I have watched you from the first day that you have come to the House floor, and you are, no doubt, one of the hardest working Members of this House, and I thank you so very much.

Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor today to urge my Republican colleagues to pass an extension of the Emergency Unemployment Compensation program and to do it now. This program is a crucial safety net for those who are most in need. My colleagues know that I represent North Carolina, but what many of you may not know is that my State, the State of North Carolina, already lost its Federal unemployment insurance last year. Republican Governor Pat McCrory turned away \$780 million in Federal funding to assist the long-term unemployed. Now, on December 28, a few days ago, 1.3 million Americans joined tens of thousands of my constituents in losing out on the support that they deserve.

This program, Mr. Speaker, is a response to the greatest recession since the Great Depression. In the last 5 years, President Obama has led our Nation back from the brink of economic collapse, but there is still work to be done. Now is not the time to abandon this program. 1.3 million Americans have been searching for work for more than 26 weeks, often after being laid off from jobs they have worked at for years.

The need for emergency unemployment insurance is especially high in communities like those that I represent in North Carolina. Double-digit unemployment still persists in many counties that I represent. In my congressional district, one in four people, including 36 percent of our children, live below the poverty level. Families in transition depend on emergency unemployment insurance to put basic food on the table, to care for their children and to search for new employment.

Last year, North Carolina Governor Pat McCrory dealt a devastating blow to the long-term unemployed by reducing State unemployment benefits. That reduction caused the Federal Emergency Unemployment Compensation program to literally dissolve in our State. Governor McCrory made this decision knowing its harmful impacts and that it would make North Carolina the only State in the country to end emergency jobless benefits for its citizens.

The Governor's decision is a disgrace. That decision forfeited—\$780 million in urgently needed Federal benefits for long-term unemployed North Carolinians and cost our State \$1.5 billion in economic activity. The elimination of the EUC program nationwide now could cost an additional